



The *Blurb*



Newsletter of The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club

61 Years of Public Service, 1949 to 2010

Volume 60 Number 4

www.phil-mont.org

April 2010



April Edition of the *Blurb*!

Free ham for hams!

See page 12 for your coupon!

IRS announces *no more taxes!*

“We can’t spend all the money we’ve got now — we’re rolling in it! Besides, we can always print more,” declares anonymous government official.

So where did all this nonsense come from? I’m glad you asked ...

The origin of April Fool’s Day is unknown. One likely theory is that April Fool’s Day comes from the Persian tradition of Sizdah Bedar, which is believed to be the oldest prank-related tradition in the world still alive, celebrated by Persians as far back as 536 B.C. Other theory is that the modern holiday was first celebrated soon after the adoption of the Gregorian calendar; the term referred to someone still adhering to the Julian Calendar, which it replaced. In many pre-Christian cultures, May Day (May 1) was celebrated as the first day of summer, and signaled the start of the spring planting season. An April Fool may have been someone who did this prematurely. Another possible origin lies in the fact that when King Charles IX of France officially changed the first day of the year from April 1 to January 1, some of his subjects continued using the old system.

**See Bob Thomas, W3NE’s, supoib article on *Phoneynetics* on page 4
and a list of *Famous Pranks* on page 6.**

<i>The Blurb</i> is published monthly by and for the members of The PHIL-MONT MOBILE RADIO CLUB, Inc., whose purpose is to promote Amateur Radio in general, and Mobile Radio in particular. <i>Copying and quoting</i> is permitted with a credit line. We gladly exchange publications with other amateur radio clubs. Requests should be sent to the Editor. <i>Subscriptions</i> are available to non-members for \$12, addressed to the Treasurer. Editor: Rick DeVirgiliis ND3B nd3b@arrl.net 215-908-7225 Club Archivist: Gwen Patton NG3P ng3p@arrl.net 610-630-9862 Labels and mailing: WB3KOJ & WB3KOH Submissions deadline: All copy must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the previous month.		Directors: W3AOK (12) KB2ERL (10) WU3I (11) WA3KIO (12) N3MT (10) W3STW (11) N3XKE (12)	Contact Phil-Mont: P.O. Box 88 Abington, PA 19001 http://www.phil-mont.org Website: Eric N3QV & Maggie K3XS For club information: Contact any club officer, or the repeaters listed below. Address or club directory changes and articles for the membership e-mail list should be sent to: WB3KOJ@comcast.net
		Sunday Morning Net Schedules • 2 Meter/ 70cm Net..... at 0930L on W3QV repeater • 10-on-10 Net at 1000L 28.393 MHz USB (±QRM) • 75 meter Net at 1020L 3.993 MHz LSB • ARES at 2100L on the W3QV repeater	
Committees Archives: NG3P Audit: NS3K Blurb folding: WB3KOJ & WB3KOH Directory: WB3KOJ	DX: N3MT Emerg.Coar: K3HWE Field Day: KE3QB Internet: N3QV & K3XS Membership: N3XKE Net Control: KB3IV	Publicity: W3RM Program: Club VP Public Service: KE3QB Refreshments: W3AOK Repeater: W3AOK	Scholarship: W3RM Skywarn: WX3PHI Sunshine: N3GLU VE Program: NS3K Welcome: N3UBY Youth: N3MT

All visitors are welcome!

The club meets at 7:30 PM on the *second* non-holiday Wednesday each month except July and August at **Roxborough Memorial Hospital, 5800 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19128**
Maps and directions are available at www.phil-mont.org.

License Examinations are held on the fourth **non-holiday Thursday** each month at **Community Ambulance Association, 1414 E. Butler Pike, Ambler PA 19002**

Registration begins at 7:00 P.M. Applicants should contact Jim McCloskey NS3K at 215-275-2979 or jmccloskey@msn.com for the latest information.

Club Stations W3QV/R: The Jim Spencer Memorial Repeater System

Ridge & Port Royal Avenues, Philadelphia, PA **Trustee: W3RM**

147.03 MHz + PL 91.5 Hz 444.80 MHz + PL 186.2 Hz

Reach us on EchoLink through W3QV-R

W3AA Trustee: WU3I

W3EM: Field Day/special event station Trustee: N3QV

The Officers

Pres: KB3IV Ed Masarsky 310 Saw Mill Ln. Horsham PA 19044 kb3iv@comcast.net

Vice Pres: N3QV Eric D. Marano, PO BOX 233, Skippack PA 19474 n3qv@arrl.net

Sec: KB3MIV Jen Miller 9427 Kirkwood Rd. 1st Fl. Phila 19114 jencaz@verizon.net

Treas: W3RM Richard A. Moll roger.mike@verizon.net

Asst. Treas: N3MT Michael P. Taraborrelli michaelmt_1999@yahoo.com

The Prez Sez ...

It's finally arrived. No, not the long-awaited sunspot cycle. Spring has sprung. Well, at least right now as I am writing my monthly column. We will see what next week brings.

I have good news to report about upgrades to our repeater system. Phil-Mont has entered the cyber world. By the time you receive this issue of the *Blurb*, we will have installed a computer at the repeater site. It will be used to supply a VOIP phone line to the controller and also allow us to have Echolink directly connected to the repeater. This will be accomplished using a 4G WiMax signal to give us connectivity to the Internet. The phone service will be obtained using Magic Jack.

I know most of you have seen the advertisements for Magic Jack on TV and are wondering if it really works. Well, I am here to tell you that it works extremely well. Bill, W3AOK, and I have run on-site tests at the repeater using a loaner Magic Jack, and we are very pleased with the results. Goodbye, Verizon! We also will have the ability to link off-site receivers to the main site using the Internet. We will develop other uses for our newfound capabilities as we progress into the 21st century of Amateur Radio.

Just a reminder: The MS walks are scheduled for this month and for May. Field Day is only three months away. I hope to see many of our members participate in these events and also at our April club meeting.

de Ed, KB3IV



***The next VE session is on Thursday,
April 22nd at 7 pm.***

Many thanks to our VE team!

***Membership Stats***

At press time, P.M.R.C. had:

78 Full Paid Members
8 Family Members
4 Youth Members
1 Honorary Members
0 Pending Members

April Birthdays

01 Gene Pressler – W3ZXV
05 Rob Moore – N2RM
06 Andrew Furlong – KC2PMW
08 Jackie Chedeville (XYL W3GQD)
15 Joan Clifford (XYL W3UY)
22 Susan Hoch (XYL WU3I)
28 Gwen Patton – NG3P
30 Al Kaufmann – K3ZMJ

From the Secretary ...

PMRC BoD Meeting Minutes, March 3, 2010

Dick, W3RM began the meeting at 2000. Attending the meeting were Bill, W3AOK; Steve, WU3I; Dick, W3RM; Gene, N3XKE; Fred, WA3KIO; Bob, KB2ERL; and Jen, KB3MIV.

W3RM, Treasurer, reported on the finances. WU3I gave the motion to accept the treasury report and KB2ERL seconded the motion.

Everyone present discussed Bill Mannino, WA3NSP (SK) and his great accomplishments.

New Business discussed: A written proposal by Ed, KB3IV, for upkeep of the repeater was discussed. WU3I moved to accept the proposal and KB3MIV seconded the motion. Everyone was in agreement. W3RM informed everyone on changes the FCC has made concerning club calls. Eric, N3QV, is the new trustee for W3EM memorial call sign. The program for the General Meeting is a show and tell, "Something Old, Something New. The meeting was adjourned at 2105.

PMRC General Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2010

Ed, KB3IV, called the meeting to order at 2000.

N3XKE mentioned there are no new members.

KC2PMW and KE3QB reported on upcoming events. MS Walks are being revamped. The MS150 is the last weekend in September. Field Day is coming up and there is new software to log contacts.

W3RM, Treasurer, stated he is winding up collecting membership dues. Some contributions to the scholarship fund have been received in memory of W3VVS.

ND3B reminded everyone that the deadline for *Blurb* entries is on the 20th of each month.

W3STW asked anyone who participated in the W3AA/60 special event station to give him or N3XKE their log list, QSL and certificate requests.

Timonium, Maryland, Hamboree and Computerfest is coming up the last weekend of March.

KB3IV asked the group for program suggestions. There were a few different suggestions such as a group trip to W1AW.

KB3IV began the Show and Tell, "Something Old, Something New." There were many different interesting items and stories to go along with those items. We saw vintage radios, catalogs, keys, and even a robot.

de Jen, KB3MIV

2010 Directory

With this *Blurb*, members should have received the 2010 PMRC Directory. If there are any errors in your listing please let me know; just e-mail wb3koj@comcast.net and the corrections will be printed in this column next month. Your revised listing also will appear in the fall supplement.

Radio Stores ... 'N' More

by Bob Thomas, W3NE

Names and station call letters in this narrative are fictitious. Any resemblance to specific amateur stations or their operators is strictly coincidental. Names and call signs have been changed to protect the guilty.

Phonetics — words spoken in place of individual letters of the alphabet they represent — were introduced in WWI. Hams and even the general public became conversant with standard phonetics during WWII, when the system designated "1945 Allied Services" was used. These phonetic equivalents were logical, easily memorized, and mostly monosyllabic words that were recognized

by all the Allies. Although good enough to win a war, 1945 phonetics were found wanting by new-age global experts of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

ICAO preferred more complex words than those proven in battle, in many cases adopting phonetics with three syllables where one had been adequate. Inexplicably, many of the words they chose for phonetics do not even sound like the letter they represented — e.g., **I** = *India* rather than **I** = *Item*, and **O** = *Oscar* instead of **O** = *Oboe*. They also ignored ARRL's admonition to avoid geographic names for phonetics because of their obvious potential to create confusion.

ICAO justified tampering with WWII Allied phonetics because those were considered to be inappropriate for use in some languages, even though — get this — *all international voice communications are conducted in English!* To make matters worse, some of these “universal” ICAO phonetics are required, by decree, to be spoken with weird pronunciations, as in “kilo,” which must be pronounced by “communicators” as *KEE-loh*. Does any nationality actually refer to weight in *KEE-loh*-grams? Have you ever been asked to “QSY up three *KEE-loh* hertz”? We've sure come a long way since 1945 in the name of “international solidarity.”

Amateurs embraced ICAO phonetics, now with the imprimatur of NATO, no less. Hardly a QSO goes by that trivial ham communications are not *declarified* by gratuitous overuse of phonetics. For example, even in QSA5, Rock-Solid, Zero-QRM conditions, many hams feel compelled to repeat their name phonetically: “The name here is Leonard: *Lima-Echo-Oscar-November-Alfa-Romeo-Delta*.” Oi! As if anybody would confuse Lenny's name with Bruce, Eric or anyone else! And is there a ham anywhere who finds *Whiskey* more understandable than plain old *W*?

Excess phonetics frequently are used during 2-meter repeater nets in DFQ conditions. The NCS is flummoxed by a torrent of long phonetics thrown from several stations at once, so fast — *and unnecessarily* — that they actually create confusion compared to short transmission of well-enunciated

call *letters*. But that wouldn't sound “official” like an F-18 pilot or orbiting astronaut. The most ironic, if not hilarious, frivolous use of phonetics is when an insecure ham recites his call first as *KEE-loh, thu-REE, Whiskey, Alpha, Lima*, only to repeat it rationally as plain “K3WAL” in an admission that the first pretentious version was really unnecessary and probably misunderstood.

It's not the intent of this article to discourage use of phonetics by amateurs *when appropriate*. It is an attempt to highlight some of many circumstances when they are counterproductive. If clarity is enhanced by phonetics, they certainly should be used. But when interjected just as a mindless habit, or to satisfy a giant ego, they get tiresome and impede accurate communications.

All is not lost, however! On April 1 of this year, representatives from 387 nations convened in Geneva, Switzerland, traditional birthplace of International Standards. The *Committee Radio-diffusion à Phonétique* (CRAP) approved a report from its PLENARY WORKING GROUP B, ANNEX IVXX, whose members have labored tirelessly for advancement of CRAP. Their new Table of Phoney-netics is reproduced below. This development vaults the flawed concepts of ICAO/NATO phonetics to their absurd limit. They are certain to be so repugnant that they will cause total abandonment of phone operation as they incite a wild scramble to adopt more modern keyboard-based digital communications where the human voice is neither needed nor tolerated ... or even to CW from a hand key!

The CRAP Table of Phoney-netic Equivalents

A	Are	N	New
B	Bee	O	Ouch
C	Cue	P	Pea
D	Duh	Q	Queue
E	Eye	R	Repeat
F	For	S	Sea
G	Gnu	T	Tea
H	Herb	U	Undo
I	Idiot	V	Venezuela
J	José	W	Why
K	Knew	X	Xerxes
L	Lieu	Y	Yew
M	Moishe	Z	Zero

NOTE: Some of the phonynetics above are based upon a list published in *REMARCS*, newsletter of the Midatlantic Amateur Radio Club. The editor then was a former Phil-Mont member — none other than the newly elected President of ARRL, Kay Craigie, N3KN, *New-Three-Knew-New*.

Famous April Fool's pranks

Some material from Wikipedia.

*Okay, it's **all** from Wikipedia. Ya got me, copper.*

- Alabama Changes the Value of Pi:** The April 1998 newsletter of *New Mexicans for Science and Reason* contained an article written by physicist Mark Boslough claiming that the Alabama Legislature had voted to change the value of the mathematical constant Pi. This claim originally appeared as a news story in the 1961 science fiction novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein; however, see also the actual Indiana Pi Bill.
- Spaghetti trees:** The BBC television program *Panorama* ran a famous hoax in 1957, showing Italians harvesting spaghetti from trees. They had claimed that the despised pest, the spaghetti weevil, had been eradicated. A large number of people contacted the BBC wanting to know how to cultivate their own spaghetti trees. It was, in fact, filmed in St Albans.
- Taco Liberty Bell:** In 1996, Taco Bell took out a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* announcing that they had purchased the Liberty Bell to “reduce the country's debt” and renamed it the “Taco Liberty Bell.” When asked about the sale, White House press secretary Mike McCurry replied tongue-in-cheek that the Lincoln Memorial also had been sold and would henceforth be known as the Lincoln Mercury Memorial.
- Decimal time:** Repeated several times in various countries, this hoax involves claiming that the time system will be changed to one in which units of time are based on powers of 10.
- Smell-o-Vision:** In 1965, the BBC purported to conduct a trial of a new technology allowing the transmission of odor over the airwaves to all viewers. Many viewers reportedly contacted the BBC to report the trial's success. In 2007, the BBC website repeated an online version of the hoax.
- Jovian-Plutonian gravitational effect:** In 1976, British astronomer Sir Patrick Moore told listeners of BBC Radio 2 that unique alignment of two planets would result in an upward gravitational pull making people lighter at precisely 9:47 a.m. that day. He invited his audience to jump in the air and experience “a strange floating sensation.” Dozens of listeners phoned in to say the experiment had worked.
- National Public Radio:** Every year National Public Radio (NPR) in the United States does an extensive news story on April 1. These usually start off more or less reasonably, and get more and more unusual. A recent example is the story on the “iBod,” a portable body control device. In 2008, it reported that the IRS, to assure rebate checks were actually spent, was shipping consumer products instead of checks. It also runs false sponsor mentions, such as “Support for NPR comes from the Soylent Corporation, manufacturing protein-rich food products in a variety of colors. Soylent Green is People.”
- Cellphone ban:** In New Zealand, radio station The Edge's “Morning Madhouse” enlisted the help of the Prime Minister on April 1 to inform the entire country that cellphones are to be banned in New Zealand. Hundreds of callers rang in, disgruntled at the new law. (*Well, that's an idea we could use here!*)
- In 1962, Swedish national television did a five-minute special on how one could get color TV by placing a nylon stocking in front of the TV. A rather in-depth description on the physics behind the phenomena was included.
- In 1980, the BBC reported a proposed change to the famous clock tower known as

Big Ben. The reporters stated that the clock would go digital.

- **Comic strip switcheroo:** Cartoonists of popularly syndicated comic strips draw each others' strips. In some cases, the artist draws characters in the other strip's milieu, while in others, the artist draws in characters from others visiting characters from his own. Cartoonists have done this sort of "switcheroo" for several years. The 1997 switch was particularly widespread.
- **President Barack Obama pulls funding for NASCAR:** On April 1, 2009, on the heels of the auto industry bailout, *Car and Driver* claimed on their web site that President Barack Obama had ordered Chevrolet and Dodge to pull NASCAR funding. The article was removed from the website and replaced with an apology to readers, after upset NASCAR fans protested on the *Car and Driver* web site. Among notables who fell for the joke was conservative pundit Ann Coulter.

Surely you're joking.



I'm quite serious.
And don't call me Shirley.

Memorable bumper stickers ...

Hang up and drive!

Keep honking, I'm reloading!

If you can read this,
you're too close!

In the words of a famous porcine personality,



"That's all, folks!"

I hope you enjoyed this month's Blurb. My YL Eileen assembled and edited this issue. I can't take credit for much of it as I can barely read it, but that should be rectified mid-April. Many thanks, Eileen, and especially for showing me the zoom feature in Word!

Don't forget, adopt a pet!

April at PMRC ...

4th Sunday – N3OWM NCS
 5th Monday Passover ends
 7th Wed - Board of Directors meeting
 11th Sunday – KB3SJV NCS
 12th Free Ham week for ham operators!
 See page 12 for your coupon.
 14th Wed - General Membership Meeting
 15th IRS wants you!
 18th Sunday - KB3IV NCS
 22th Thurs – VE test session
 25th Sunday – K3XS NCS

And don't forget the **ARES** net every
 Sunday night at 2100L on the club repeater.

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For Sale:

Double Braided Dacron Rope 3/16 diameter.
 Black in color. Will cut to requested length. \$0.14
 per foot.

Rohn 6 40 foot tower with rotor shelf and fold-over
 base. \$150.00

Mosley TA-33 \$150.00

Cushcraft A-3 \$150.00 (1 available)

Contact **Steve, WU3I**, with any questions

*Please feel free to forward to other clubs of which you
 are a member.*

Also ...

1999 Mercury Grand Marquis GS

89,000 miles, garage kept, well-cared for, body in
 very good condition. Complete with 2-meter mobile
 installation. \$3,300.

Kenwood TS-830 \$300.

Contact **Tom Bohlander** WA3KLR, 215-536-1331

First Class Mail

The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club, Inc
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